

2 items stolen from museum

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An historic jewel box and a giant ivory eagle have been stolen from the Oakland Museum.

The museum curator placed the value "in excess of \$25,000."

A spokesman said somebody forced open a permanently closed door from the museum garden sometime between the 5 p.m. closing time on Thursday and 9 a.m. yesterday. Officials are making an inventory of thousands of items but apparently nothing else was taken, a spokesman said.

The spokesman said this is apparently the first time there has ever been a forced-entry theft from the Oakland Museum.

The ivory eagle, which stood about 24 inches high with a wingspan of about 30 inches, stood on a pole where it was the most prominent item in the political history section of the museum. The eagle, manufactured in China about 1880, was purchased for the museum for \$5,000 in 1969. It was prized because of its excellent workmanship.

The "Comstock Jewel Casket" was displayed in a case near the eagle. A spokesman said the casket was made about 1875 by "A. Andrews," a San Francisco goldsmith, and was purchased for the museum for \$11,400 in 1969. It was displayed as an example of excellent craftsmanship and wealth from the Victorian era in San Francisco.

The jewel box, measuring 7 by 9 inches, was covered with selected examples of gold-bearing moss quartz from California mines. Decorations on the inner lining showed scenes typical of the early days of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroad—a train crossing the plain, mounted Indians and a herd of fleeing buffalo. The box rested on four feet formed of miniature figures of Minerva, a symbol of California.

Both the jewel box and ivory eagle were given to the museum by anonymous donors.

Police said the jewel box was the only item taken from the display case which was found broken open. The ivory eagle was cut from a display pole.